# General Assembly

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## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*without reference to a Main Committee (A/63/L.47 and Add.1)*]

### 63/137. Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster

*The General Assembly*,

*Recalling* its resolutions 46/182 of 19 December 1991, 57/152 of 16 December 2002, 57/256 of 20 December 2002, 58/25 of 5 December 2003, 58/214 and 58/215 of 23 December 2003, 59/212 of 20 December 2004, 59/231 and 59/233 of 22 December 2004, 59/279 of 19 January 2005, 60/15 of 14 November 2005, 61/132 of 14 December 2006 and 62/91 of 17 December 2007,

*Commending* the prompt response, continued support, generous assistance and contributions of the international community, Governments, civil society, the private sector and individuals, in the relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, which reflect the spirit of international solidarity and cooperation to address the disaster,

*Noting* the Declaration on Action to Strengthen Emergency Relief, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Prevention in the Aftermath of the Earthquake and Tsunami Disaster of 26 December 2004, adopted at the special meeting of leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, held in Jakarta on 6 January 2005,[1]

*Recalling* the Hyogo Declaration[2] and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015,[3] as well as the common statement of the special session on the Indian Ocean disaster,[4] adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, from 18 to 22 January 2005,

*Taking note* of the report of the Secretary-General,[5]

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[1] A/59/669, annex.

[2] A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 1.

[3] Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 2).

[4] Common statement of the special session on the Indian Ocean disaster: risk reduction for a safer future (A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, annex II).

[5] A/63/84-E/2008/80.

*Stressing* the need to continue to develop and implement disaster risk reduction strategies and to integrate them, where appropriate, into national development plans, in particular through the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, so as to enhance the resilience of populations in disasters and reduce the risks to them, their livelihoods, the social and economic infrastructure and environmental resources, and stressing also the need for Governments to develop and implement effective national plans for hazard warning systems with a disaster risk reduction approach,

*Emphasizing* that disaster reduction, including reducing vulnerability to natural disasters, is an important element that contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,

*Emphasizing also* the role of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in coordinating the establishment of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System, given the importance of strengthening regional and subregional cooperation and coordination, which is essential for effective early warning system arrangements for tsunamis,

*Commending* the operationalization of the Multi-Donor Voluntary Trust Fund on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia, and inviting Governments, donor countries, relevant international organizations, international and regional financial institutions, the private sector and civil society to consider contributing to the Trust Fund through financial contributions and technical cooperation to support the establishment of the tsunami early warning system in accordance with the needs of the countries of the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia so that the Trust Fund contributes to the development of an integrated early warning system based on adequate resources and comprising a network of collaborative centres connected to the global system,

*Stressing* the need for continued commitment to assist the affected countries and their peoples, particularly the most vulnerable groups, to fully recover from the catastrophic and traumatic effects of the disaster, including in their medium- and long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, and welcoming Government and international assistance measures in this regard,

*Noting* that progress has been achieved in the recovery and rehabilitation efforts of tsunami-affected countries, and noting also that efforts and assistance are still required to re-establish the basis for long-term sustainable development,

*Welcoming* the development or strengthening of disaster management institutions in some affected countries that provide leadership in comprehensive disaster risk reduction as well as strengthen emergency response at local and national levels,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the efforts by the Governments of affected countries to undertake the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase, as well as in enhancing financial transparency and accountability, with respect to the channelling and utilization of resources, including, as appropriate, through the involvement of international public auditors;

2. *Recognizes and encourages* ongoing efforts to promote transparency and accountability among donors and recipient countries by means of, inter alia, a unified financial and sectoral information online tracking system, and highlights the importance of timely and accurate information on assessed needs and the sources

and uses of funds, and the continued support of donors, where needed, for further development of online tracking systems in the affected countries;

3. *Encourages* the sharing of lessons learned by tsunami-affected countries and other relevant stakeholders with other disaster-affected and disaster-prone countries, including on how prevention, risk reduction and humanitarian assistance measures could be improved in the future;

4. *Encourages* donor communities and international and regional financial institutions, as well as the private sector and civil society, to strengthen partnerships and to continue to support the medium- and long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction needs of the affected countries;

5. *Urges* Governments of the affected countries to identify their unmet needs in terms of financial and technical assistance in order to foster the ongoing efforts to enhance national capacity and create a reliable tsunami early warning system in the region in concert with the activities of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;

6. *Welcomes* the steps taken by those Governments and regional organizations to improve their legal and institutional frameworks for disaster management, and encourages them to continue to examine ways to strengthen their regulatory frameworks for international disaster assistance, including by taking into consideration, as appropriate, the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance adopted at the Thirtieth International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, held from 26 to 30 November 2007;

7. *Notes with appreciation* the efforts of international agencies, donor countries and relevant civil society organizations in supporting the Governments of affected countries to develop national capacity for tsunami warning and response so as to increase public awareness and provide community-based support for disaster risk reduction;

8. *Encourages* the continued effective coordination among the Governments of affected countries, relevant bodies of the United Nations system, international organizations, donor countries, regional and international financial institutions, civil society, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and private sectors involved in rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, in order to ensure the effective implementation of existing joint programmes and to prevent unnecessary duplication and reduce vulnerability to future natural hazards, as well as to adequately respond to the remaining humanitarian needs, where needed;

9. *Emphasizes* the need for the development of stronger institutions, mechanisms and capacities at the regional, national and local levels, as affirmed in the Hyogo Declaration[2] and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015,[3] and the promotion of public education, awareness and community participation, in order to systematically build resilience to hazards and disasters, as well as reduce the risks and the vulnerability of populations to disasters, including an effective and sustained tsunami warning system;

10. *Stresses* the need for relevant bodies of the United Nations system, international organizations, regional and international financial institutions, civil society and the private sector to implement programmes according to assessed needs and agreed priorities of the Governments of tsunami-affected countries and to ensure full transparency and accountability for their programme activities;

11. *Calls upon* States to fully implement the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015, in particular those commitments related to assistance for developing countries that are prone to natural disasters and for disaster-stricken States in the transition phase towards sustainable, physical, social and economic recovery, for risk-reduction activities in post-disaster recovery and for rehabilitation processes;

12. *Stresses* the importance of and the need for regular updating of recovery assessment by the Governments of affected countries, the United Nations system and international and regional financial institutions, based on the affected countries' national data and utilizing a consistent methodology, in order to reassess progress and identify gaps and priorities, with the participation of the local community during the recovery and reconstruction phase, in order to build back better;

13. *Recognizes* that the Tsunami Recovery Impact Assessment and Monitoring System is a valuable common analytical framework for assessing and monitoring the impact of tsunami recovery and for informing effective planning and programming;

14. *Acknowledges* that relevant activities in evaluating and strengthening the tsunami early warning systems have focused principally on establishing the system's governance structure, its technical implementation, increasing public awareness and preparedness, including training, and technical advice;

15. *Welcomes* the operationalization of Tsunami Warning Focal Points capable of receiving and disseminating tsunami advisories around the clock, and encourages the continuation of the efforts of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission supported by Member States, United Nations agencies and donors, including for developing national action plans for all countries participating in the Indian Ocean tsunami early warning system;

16. *Also welcomes* the work of the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction in establishing partnership among relevant actors, and stresses the importance for countries to establish early warning systems that are people-centred;

17. *Urges* Governments and the United Nations system, in planning for disaster preparedness and responding to natural disasters, and in implementing recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, to integrate a gender perspective and provide every opportunity for women to take a full, active and equal role in all phases of disaster management;

18. *Expresses its deep appreciation* to relevant United Nations organizations, in particular the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, and other humanitarian and relevant development actors, including the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in the relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts in the affected countries;

19. *Welcomes* significant progress, achievements and outcomes in the affected countries, and requests the United Nations system to continue to provide its support to those countries as efforts are being mainstreamed into long-term development assistance projects and programmes.

*68th plenary meeting*
*11 December 2008*